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**Evangelical Visitor - March 25, 1979 Vol. XCII. No. 6.**

John E. Zercher

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# Evangelical VISITOR

March 25, 1979

Local Operations  
53.41%

Local Capital  
21.29%

General Conference  
14.71%



**Where  
Did  
The  
Dollar  
Go?**

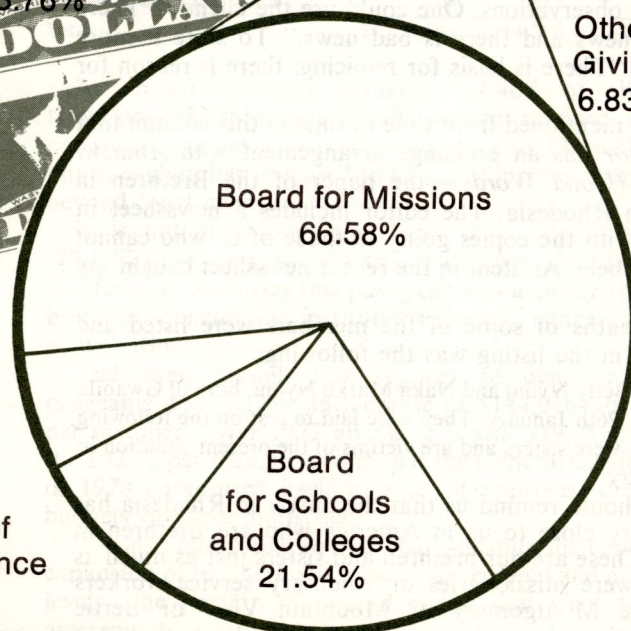
(See pages 3 and 4)

Assessment  
3.76%

Other  
Giving  
6.83%

Board for  
Christian  
Education  
5.48%

Board of  
Benevolence  
6.40%



Board for Missions  
66.58%

Board  
for Schools  
and Colleges  
21.54%



# Church News

## Messiah College

### Ministers Conference

The fourteenth Annual Ministers Conference at Messiah College was one of the largest ever with a registration of 165 pastors and wives. The attendance was especially good in light of the bad road conditions.

The main speakers were Dr. Richard C. Halverson, pastor from Washington, D.C.; Dr. Wesley Duewel, president of OMS International; and Dr. Robert Smith, psychiatrist from Philadelphia.



David P. McBeth, Conference Chairman, (left) converses with Rev. Avery Musser during coffee break. Rev. Musser is pastor of the Mount Rock congregation.

## From the Editor

This issue centers on the life and work of the church—stewardship, church planting and church growth, a service ministry through MCC, and a look at the General Conference of 1980.

From those who like to work with numbers the lead article will have its own fascination. I would encourage those who may be “turned off” by numbers to give special effort to Carl Keefer’s article. He has made some interesting observations. One could use the cliché—“There is good news and there is bad news.” To state it more formally “There is basis for rejoicing; there is reason for concern.”

I have mentioned from time to time in this column that the *Visitor* has an exchange arrangement with *Amazwi Amahle (Good Words)*—the paper of the Brethren in Christ in Rhodesia. The editor includes a newsheet in English with the copies going to those of us who cannot read Ndebele. An item in the recent newsheet caught my attention.

The deaths of some of the members were listed and included in the listing was the following:

“Naka Betty Nyoni and Naka Marko Nyoni, both of Gwabala church of, 26th January. They were laid to rest on the following day. They were sisters and are victims of the present situation in our country.”

This should remind us that the unrest in Rhodesia has come very close to us in America who are Brethren in Christ. These are our brethren and sisters just as much as if they were missionaries or voluntary service workers from the Montgomery or Mountain View or Bertie congregations.

Although many Brethren in Christ pastors attend each year, at least half of the registrants come from many other denominations.

### Alumni Association Sponsors Tour

The Messiah College Alumni Association is sponsoring a holiday tour in Switzerland from June 22 through 30, 1979. The tour includes round trip transportation from Messiah College, hotel accommodations in Zurich, all transfers and baggage handling, a “Welcome to Switzerland Party,” and five sightseeing tours to outstanding Swiss attractions.

The rate, based on twin bedded rooms, is \$725. Reservations, accepted on a first come, first served basis, are confirmed upon the receipt of \$100.00 deposit per person. Final payments need to be submitted 60 days before departure. Those interested should contact Robert L. Fry, Director of Alumni Affairs, Messiah College, Grantham, PA 17027. Phone: (717) 766-2511.

## Missions

### Ministers Conference Held

A ministers conference for Brethren in Christ pastors in Rhodesia was held at the Mpopoma Church, Bulawayo, January 29-February 1. This opportunity for pastors to meet together is very important in light of the unsettled conditions in Rhodesia.

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## Our 1978 Stewardship

# Basis for Rejoicing / Reasons for Concern

Carl Keefer

How many people do you think it takes to prepare the denominational giving analysis released each year by the Commission on Stewardship and Finance? One person . . . five persons . . . or perhaps ten? Would you believe nearly 400 people?

First, church treasurers must document the actual giving of their respective congregations for the expired fiscal period. These results must then be tabulated—along with the statistical information compiled by the pastor or church secretary—in the annual report to the bishop.

The bishops, in turn, must record membership and provide the breakdown of giving for each congregation under their oversight. The resulting compilations must then be forwarded to the secretary of the Commission on Stewardship and Finance for further summarization and analysis. With nearly 200 churches in the United States and Canada, almost 400 persons are involved before the analysis is complete.

### General Overview

Giving to Christ's cause and kingdom through the Brethren In Christ Church during 1978 totaled \$7,171,871. This aggregate amount reflects an increase of \$637,352—or 9.75%—over the \$6,534,519 contributed at the congregational level during the prior twelve months.

Per member giving, based on a year-end membership of 14,479 climbed to \$495.33, a gain of \$22.84 over the average of \$472.49 credited to each member during 1977. This increase represents a growth of 4.83% in per member giving.

The Canadian Conference led the denomination in individual contributions with an average of \$570.63 being donated by each member, a gain of 15.82% over the per member giving of the previous accounting period.

Special recognition should also be given to the Midwest Conference which experienced an increase of 20.93% in per member giving, as well as the Central Conference which averaged \$517.33 per member, \$22.00 above the denominational average.

*This article was researched and written by the Director of Stewardship and Finance (U.S.). His office is 7733 Hillcrest Avenue, Harrisburg, PA 17112.*

### Distribution Patterns

Distribution of the congregational dollar during 1978 was as follows:

Usage	Total Giving	Percentage Of Total	Per Member
Local Operations	\$3,830,694	53.41%	\$264.57
Local Capital	1,527,018	21.29%	105.46
Gen. Conf. Ministries	1,054,693	14.71%	72.84
Other Giving	489,757	6.83%	33.83
Assessments	269,709	3.76%	18.63
Total	\$7,171,871	100.00%	\$495.33

The breakdown of giving to General Conference agencies and institutions was:

Ministry	Amount	Percentage Of Total	Per Member
Board for Missions	\$ 702,202	9.79%	\$ 48.50
Bd. for Schools & Colleges	227,109	3.17%	15.69
Board of Benevolence	67,624	0.94%	4.66
Bd. of Christian Education	57,769	0.81%	3.99
Total	\$1,054,693	14.71%	\$ 72.84

As shown by these statistics, 74.40% of all contributions—53.41% plus 21.29%—were retained at the congregational level to fund local programs. Only 25 cents out of each dollar was used to foster an increased ministry beyond local needs.

It is not surprising, therefore, that only four-fifths (79.07%) of the \$1,333,863 budgeted for General Conference ministries this past year was actually received by these agencies and institutions through congregational contributions.

And even though this support of denominational programs does reflect an increase of \$144,016—or \$6.99 per member—over 1977 giving, it is still \$19.28 short of the \$92.12 per member giving that the General Conference of 1978 committed itself to when it approved the 1978 budgets of these ministries.

It is also interesting to note that—despite the continued expansion of brotherhood services at regional and national levels—the portion of overall giving that went toward assessments is still only a modest 3.76%.

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### Stewardship Potential

Based on the 1978 membership and on a tithe of the average per capita disposable personal income\*—\$6,575.90 in the United States and \$6,611.60 in Canada—the aggregate giving *potential* of Brethren in Christ congregations during 1978 can be calculated as \$9,528,561.

When this potential tithe is compared with the actual congregational giving during 1978 of \$7,171,871 the unfulfilled giving amounts to \$2,356,690.

We realize, of course, that most Christians compute tithe on the basis of gross income rather than that which remains after personal taxes are deducted (disposable income). Our reason for using these conservative income statistics is that we do not have a more reliable source of current information, and even these deflated numbers indicate significant untapped potential.

We also recognize that some members gave much more than 10% of their effective buying income this past year. Many others practiced consistent tithing; but it appears that a significant number gave substantially less than their actual giving potential.

### Giving Trends

With the exception of one year, the total amount contributed to General Conference ministries has risen consistently for the past decade. In spite of these increases, the support of denominational programs as a percentage of total congregational giving has declined from 23.3% in 1967 to a low of 13.9% in 1977.

Calendar year 1978 may mark the beginning of a reversal in this trend, for during the past twelve months, congregational contributions to General Conference agencies and institutions has increased to 14.7% of overall giving, a gain of 0.8%.

Another area of interest is per member giving. A review of these statistics will reveal that per member giving in the Brethren in Christ Church has been an unbroken series of annual increases for at least ten years.

When a tithe of per capita spending *potential* is compared with *actual* giving per member, however, a less exciting trend in denominational giving is noted:

Year	Estimated Per Capita Tithe	Actual Giving Per Member	Achieved Giving Level
1973	\$406.94	\$393.22	9.66%
1974	450.88	393.56	8.75%
1975	473.01	415.37	8.78%
1976	542.73	444.55	8.19%
1977	597.93	472.49	7.90%
1978	658.10	495.33	7.53%
1979*	726.01	519.25	7.15%
1980*	800.21	544.33	6.80%

\*Based on current rates of increase.

As can be seen above, the brotherhood's achieved giving level of 9.66% in 1973 has fallen almost consistently ever since. In fact, if present rates are continued, the differential between projected potential and anticipated giving,

\*Disposable personal income is "after taxes" income or in lay terms "take-home pay."

will increase to \$255.88 per member by 1980, for an achieved giving level of only 6.80%.

Join with us in praying that this trend might also be reversed in the months and years ahead.

### Looking Ahead

Based on continued numerical growth of 4.69% per annum—4.32% in the United States and 7.00% in Canada this past year—and assuming that personal income will increase during the next twelve months at about the same rate it increased during the past year, the aggregate giving potential of Brethren in Christ constituents for calendar year 1979 can be projected as \$11,005,524. The breakdown of giving that will be necessary to fund General Conference agencies and institutions during the current fiscal period is listed below:

Ministry	1979 Budget	Percentage Of Total	Per Member
Board of Benevolence	\$60,000	3.34%	\$ 3.96
Bd. of Christian Ed.	61,975	3.45%	4.09
Board for Missions	875,450	48.70%	57.75
Bd. for Schools & Colleges:			
Operations	234,500	13.05%	15.47
Capital	565,000	31.43%	37.27
Other: NAE Capital	500	0.03%	0.03
Total	\$1,797,425	100.00%	\$118.57

If overall giving during 1979 is consistent with the giving potential of \$11,005,524 projected above, only 16.33% of this amount would need to be directed toward denominational ministries in order to completely underwrite their budgets.

If, however, the giving gains of 1978 are continued into 1979—that is, per member increases of \$13.68 (2.92%) in the United States and \$77.94 (15.82%) in Canada—actual receipts will fall short of the aggregate giving potential by 28.28%—or \$3,111,973.

Should the latter characterize actual giving, 22.77% of each contributed dollar would need to flow into General Conference programs in order to adequately support these ministries.

### Conclusion

The potential for a substantial increase in giving is within the hands of the members and friends of the Brethren in Christ Church. Imagine what this could mean to the work of the Lord in terms of:

1. Meeting the needs of the local church.
2. Providing more adequate compensation for pastors.
3. Strengthening regional and General Conference ministries.
4. Planting new churches in North America.
5. Opening and expanding mission fields.

Pray earnestly that more individuals and families will follow the leading of the Holy Spirit as it relates to their use of God's money during 1979.

Then prove your love for the Master with action—not just words. Accept the challenge of sacrificial living and liberal giving. No other form of investment will bring greater satisfaction or richer returns.

Remember, it's not what we get, but *what we give*, that measures the worth of the life we live.





## A Planting of the Lord

*Dorothy Sherk*

Westheights Brethren in Christ Community Church had its inception about five years ago through the concern felt by Judy Diltz and Delores Winger for the salvation of their neighbors. They organized a morning coffee-hour Bible study in Delores' home in the fast-growing Forest Heights subdivision in the city of Kitchener, Ontario. Although it got off to a slow start, it suddenly and unpredictably began to mushroom until the group had to divide. Women accepted Christ and began to understand how to apply God's Word to the everyday problems of their lives. The group had been carried on as an inter-denominational venture, but it wasn't long until many of them along with their families began to attend the Rosebank Brethren in Christ Church.

Rosebank is a rural church a few miles from the Kitchener city limits. How would these new Christians respond to its architectural plainness and its lack of liturgy—so different from their previous experiences with church-going? But the responses were all positive. "Those people really live Jesus," they would say. "They are so friendly and genuine!" "It's a real family church." They appreciated,

too, an order of service which combined dignity with freedom, and where worship structures did not stifle the free flow of the Spirit.

Ronald Lofthouse had recently become pastor of the Rosebank congregation. He began to cultivate the friendship of the husbands in these families. Soon the church walls were practically bulging on a Sunday morning. There was some thought of having two worship services, but this would not have relieved the congestion in Sunday school. Enlarging the facilities was dependent on the acquisition of more land. To everyone's surprise, the farmer, whose property surrounded the church, was adamant in his refusal to sell. By this time we were beginning to get the message that perhaps the Lord wanted a Brethren in Christ church in Kitchener.

Accordingly, under the enthusiastic leadership of Bishop Harvey Sider, a task force was set up in September, 1978, and a feasibility study launched. In record time a telephone survey was completed, promotional materials prepared, and permission received to rent facilities in the city's newest elementary school. On November 26 the door opened for the first service. The Lord confirmed our faith by giving an attendance at that first service of over eighty and an offering of over six hundred dollars.

Much is being done to maintain the

mother-daughter relationship of the two congregations. Westheights is still joining Rosebank for the Sunday evening service. Some youth activities and social events are shared. More important, perhaps, is the fact that the pastor is also being shared until next summer, when Phil and Judy Keefer plan to come from Pennsylvania to assume responsibility for the new work.

Westheights became an organized congregation on January 28 when fifty-four persons accepted charter membership. Thirty-eight of these were transfers from other Brethren in Christ congregations.

In spite of this, the Rosebank congregation is far from depleted. The division was such that both congregations have good leaders, and both have room to grow. The crowning event of Charter Membership Sunday was the evening baptismal service, in which nine new Christians publicly proclaimed their faith in Christ. Another cause for thankfulness is that two of our members, Keith and Bev Cober, have accepted an assignment in Zambia. It seems that we will be a missionary-minded church right from the beginning.

Working in church-planting can be an exciting and satisfying experience. I should like to conclude this article with some random observations:

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*The writer is retired from a career of teaching in both public and Christian schools. She is now active in the work of the Canadian Conference and in the Westheights congregation.*



1. There are many approaches to church-planting. The mother-church, daughter-church approach may not be entirely painless, but it has many advantages. Westheights averages over seventy persons at the Sunday services. A worshiping group of this size is an encouragement to the congregation itself as well as to the community people who drop in. If a new work is to impress the community, there must be enthusiasm and a high degree of excellence in the implementation of the program. For this, we need people.

2. It is important to be in step with God's timing. The Westheights congregation was formed in response to a need created by a genuine moving of the Holy Spirit in our midst.

3. It is important to put new

Christians to work after they have received a degree of nurture. This does not always happen easily in an established congregation with plenty of strong leadership. In a new and growing work, there are plenty of opportunities for all kinds of Christian service.

4. A new and growing subdivision almost devoid of churches provided a real mission-field right at our doorsteps. Forest Heights is a middle-class community, which nevertheless has its quota of people with financial and marital problems, and people who long to experience the warmth and the genuineness of caring to be found only in the community of the people of God. We need, then, to lift up our eyes to the fields at home as well as to those far away.

5. Could we continue indefinitely to be a congregation without property? Perhaps. There are some limitations and uncertainties in respect to the use of the school. Present plans are to launch a joint fund-drive next fall in conjunction with the Rosebank congregation, with the view of land-purchase for Westheights, and building expansion at Rosebank. Strangely enough, the farmer changed his mind shortly after the Kitchener work was launched, thus freeing Rosebank to implement its plan to upgrade its facilities.

6. In church-planting, there is no substitute for an enthusiasm and unity born of the desire to advance the Kingdom and to walk in step with the Lord doing it.

## General Conference-1980

by Paul Hostetler

The next General Conference of the Brethren in Christ Church will convene in Canada from Saturday, June 28, through Thursday, July 3, 1980. Since some families make their vacation plans more than a year ahead of time, and since food and lodging costs will be higher than in previous conferences, advance information should prove helpful.

As most readers know, the General Conference has for many years (perhaps from the first) determined its meeting sites. The choices do not appear to have followed any pattern until 1952, when a five-year rotation was adopted: Niagara Christian College (Ontario); Messiah College, Pennsylvania; Upland Church and College, (California); Roxbury Camp Grounds (Pennsylvania); and Memorial Camp Grounds (Ohio).

The five-year plan was followed through 1972, when General Conference voted to change from an annual to a biennial conference. At the same time it decided to meet in three areas and in the following order: west of the Mississippi, east of the Mississippi, and in Canada.

It was also decided in 1972 to have General Conference convene on the Sunday nearest the first of July and continue through the following Thursday. The opening day was later changed to Saturday.

*The writer in addition to numerous denominational responsibilities, as well as Director of Public Information for Messiah College, is Convention Director for the denomination's biennial conference.*

The first such biennial Conference was held at Niagara Christian College in 1974. The large volunteer staff did a very good job in providing needed services, but were hampered by limited housing and meeting-room facilities. The most serious lack was housing, a situation made more acute when registration totaled more than in any previous General Conference in history.

In an attempt to improve matters, Azusa Pacific College, in Azusa, California, was selected as the site for the 1976 General Conference. Although the facilities there were better, dissatisfaction arose when it became necessary to house many people off campus (caused again by an unexpectedly large registration).

The most recent Conference was at Messiah College. The fine facilities and services there are more than adequate for an average convocation of the brotherhood, but were taxed to such an extent for the 200th Anniversary General Conference that a few people needed to be housed elsewhere.

My experience in working with physical arrangements for the past three sessions of our General Conference has caused me to reach some tentative conclusions.

1. Shifting to a biennial Conference has resulted in attendance growth rather than decrease as some had feared.
2. Having an increased emphasis on total family involvement has brought more people in recent years.

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3. The growth of the church has also contributed to the swelling numbers at Conference.
4. Most people attending Conference strongly desire (even expect) first-rate housing and meal and meeting arrangements. There are some exceptions to this, but only a few.
5. Because of all these factors, acceptable sites for General Conference, *at the prices we have been paying*, are becoming very hard to find.

The Canadian Conference leaders, well aware of the General Conference's site schedule calling for the 1980 convocation to meet in Canada, appointed a committee to work on the situation well before the 1978 General Conference. When they strongly agreed that the Niagara Christian College facilities were inadequate, and discovered that all campuses in Southern Ontario which could handle such a convention had considerably higher rates, they reluctantly suggested to the denominational Board of Directors (BOD) the hosting of Conference in Canada be postponed to a later date.

The BOD took their proposal seriously and asked me to search out possible sites in the Midwest. However, upon further reflection, the BOD decided to have the Conference in Canada for the following reasons.

1. Special action of General Conference would be needed to do otherwise.
2. Since it did not seem that Niagara Christian College facilities would be adequate for Conference entertainment in the foreseeable future, postponement did not solve the problem.
3. When the increased transportation costs were considered, the total cost to the brotherhood for voting members of Conference would be more at points west of the Mississippi than in Southern Ontario, even with the considerably higher cost factor for meals and lodging in Ontario.

And so, after careful study, and in consultation with Canadian leadership, it was decided to convene the 1980 General Conference on the campus of McMaster University, in Hamilton, Ontario. The large campus has more than enough housing, excellent meal service, and many choices of meeting rooms and auditoriums. For those who like a rural atmosphere, the botanical gardens nearby offer woods, waters, and miles of meandering nature trails.

Hamilton is strategically located between Toronto and Niagara Falls, and is therefore within reasonable driving distance of most Brethren in Christ Churches in Southern Ontario. The McMaster campus has every-half-hour limousine service to and from the Toronto and Hamilton airports, and city bus connections from the Greyhound terminal in Hamilton. For people coming by car, expressways pass near the campus, and parking space is in the conference area.

The 1979 daily rates for three meals in the large dining room at McMaster are \$9.00. (Please note that these are 1979 rates in Canadian currency; a year of inflation will need to be added to all meal and lodging rates mentioned in this report. This of course, would pertain also in the U.S.) Those who prefer to economize on food costs can eat their meals at a nearby campus cafeteria.

Housing on campus will be in two hotel-like structures with front-desk service 24 hours a day. Brandon Hall is an

eleven-story building, and Woodstock Hall has six floors. Both are air-conditioned and elevator equipped, with lounges and kitchenettes on each floor. All rooms are carpeted.

The 1979 lodging costs at McMaster are \$10.00 per night for each adult, two to a room. Single rooms are \$14.00. After five nights at these rates, two additional nights are available free. In other words, the cost for five nights, six nights, or seven nights is exactly the same.

The rates for those under 17 are \$5.00 per night, two to a room, and \$7.00 for single rooms. Again, the cost for five, six, or seven nights is the same. The cost for small children sleeping on the floor in their parents' room is being negotiated. For those interested in camping, well-equipped campsites are within easy commuting range of the campus.

While the 1978 rates at McMaster University were considerably higher than they were at Messiah College, it should be remembered that the college gave the 1978 General Conference a full 20 percent discount on all meal and lodging costs.

Families planning to attend the Conference will perhaps appreciate knowing that Hamilton and the surrounding areas have many points of historic and natural interest, and they may choose to extend their stay in order to visit these sites.

Registration blanks for the 1980 General Conference, along with full information, will be included in the EVANGELICAL VISITOR early in 1980. This is mentioned here because numbers of people inquired in late 1977 about making reservations for the 1978 Conference. However, feel free at any time to direct inquiries to Paul Hostetler, Convention Director, Grantham, PA 17027. Phone: (717) 766-2621; office 766-2511.

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## Book Review

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ASSIMILATING NEW MEMBERS, Lyle E. Schaller, 128 pp., \$3.95, paper, Nashville: Abingdon, 1978

This book will not appeal to all readers, but should be of interest to church leaders, lay and clergy, interested in helping new members become effectively involved in their local church. The preface explains ten assumptions on which the book is based. The author then discusses the "glue" which holds congregations together. From this he moves to the dynamics of inclusion and exclusion of people. An interesting negative technique is used in "Twelve ways to keep people from joining your church" and "How to kill a new Sunday School class for young couples." At several places checklists for self-evaluation and questions for self-examination are included.

The book does not provide answers, but certainly succeeds in stimulating questions. It could be used as a discussion guide at a weekend church board retreat.

The author is the editor of the Creative Leadership Series. Other topics to be covered in the series include "How to Begin a New Pastorate," "Time Management," "Motivation of Volunteers," and "Stewardship." Because of my favorable impression with this volume, I shall look forward to the rest of the series.

David E. Byer, M.D.  
Rochester, Minn.





## MCC—Wide-Ranging Agenda

Quietly and without much fanfare, Mennonite Central Committee's annual meeting Jan. 25-27 in the First Mennonite Church here made a type of history all its own. It was the first time the Mennonite and Brethren in Christ relief agency was meeting on the West Coast. It was the first time in three years that the annual meeting wasn't snarled with snow. And, perhaps more significantly, it was the first time that strictly U.S. issues were not on the agenda of the binational body.

Encouraged by MCC (Canada), U.S. members had met separately from the annual sessions to discuss MCC matters pertaining to their own nation. Canadian members had long pressed for an annual meeting at which binational members would not spend time dealing with agenda items that were purely national in nature.

While several Canadian members seemed pleased that the annual meeting was concentrating on only joint issues, a few American members were worried that the growing development of a separate U.S. organization would be divisive and could lead to creating two independent agencies.

**Photo above:** MCC Vice-Chairman Elmer Neufeld (center) addresses board members at the Friday morning session of the annual meeting. Seated are MCC (Canada) Executive Secretary J.M. Klassen, Chairman Newton Gingrich, Executive Secretary William Snyder, Assistant Secretary Roy Sider. (Photo by Mark Beach.)

Canadian member Hugo Jantz responded that "We in MCC (Canada) are committed to continuing to work together with the churches of the United States. We aren't considering any other way of working . . . In a marriage things go better if there is a basic commitment to stay together. We've made that commitment. But we are not saying either partner must grow as the other partner has grown."

A recurring theme that involved Christians on both sides of the 49th parallel was that of justice and human rights overseas. It was felt that North Americans, through trade policies and the like, contribute to poverty and injustice in developing countries.

"Our workers abroad keep asking, 'How serious are the churches back home about justice?'" said overseas secretary Edgar Stoesz.

"To what extent should we be creating greater awareness of human rights problems in the Third World?" asked Canadian member Peter H. Peters.

The justice question is crucial, asserted member-at-large Ron Sider. "Our work doesn't have integrity" unless we squarely face the possibility that our trade policies here do injustice abroad. Admitting that his comments sounded harsh, he said those who do not take interest in human rights violations abroad are "denying that we're committed to Jesus and his lordship." He believed the supporting constituency is willing to listen when

justice problems are approached in a biblical way. "Let's have a lot of courage and pray hard and depend on the Spirit and we can do a lot," he said.

Another thorny issue was aid to Vietnam. MCC wants to work at maintaining relationships with Vietnam, particularly the evangelical church there, and plans to send 1,000 tons of wheat to help alleviate Vietnam's severe food shortage. Problematic to some members was Vietnam's wish to receive aid "with no strings attached," which flies in the face of MCC's longstanding policy to have representatives on hand to supervise the distribution of aid.

Another hesitation arose due to Vietnam's recent invasion of Cambodia. One member wondered if the constituency would continue to contribute to MCC if it knew the agency was helping a country (and a socialist one, at that) which is at war with its neighbor. Responded another member, "If we're afraid that some of the enemy gets this food, how biblical are we? How much screening did Jesus do when he fed the 5,000? Did he ensure there were no Pharisees in the crowd?"

Roy Sider, Brethren in Christ representative, also wondered if MCC should "be troubled about who gets fed by our wheat. If our enemy hungers, we feed him. Why should we be so hesitant?"

Another member pointed out that MCC undertakes development in





Edgar Stoesz, left, and William Snyder, both of the Akron office, during discussion of the relationship of the Canadian and U.S. offices.

countries that have rightwing dictatorship who also abridge human rights. Why then should MCC back off when the recipient is a leftwing nation?

The board finally agreed to send aid "subject to approval of an MCC person(s) to negotiate an acceptable plan for distribution."

Paul Longacre, MCC's secretary of food and hunger concerns, examined the progress made since the 1974 Hillsboro resolution in which MCC pledged to give priority to the world food crisis. Although giving has increased, people have been challenged to consume less and MCC has accelerated its food development programs, "much remains undone or partially complete."

"We in MCC and the conference leadership have not done well enough in keeping the needs of the world's hungry before our people . . . We have not done as much as we should have in encouraging our elected officials in either Washington or Ottawa to use the Canadian and U.S. food surplus for the poor."

"Despite some good efforts on the part of Christians in North America, there are still 455 million hungry people in the world. 'Economic, social and political issues call for changes in the way we live and more attention in MCC programming . . . Peace is related to hunger. The 400 billion dollars spent for arms are not available for irrigation, better seeds or livestock improvements,'" said Longacre.

Some of his concerns were further addressed in a paper on militarism by Urbane Peachy, secretary of MCC Peace Section International. It was a follow-up to last summer's Mennonite World Conference call to "restore our

home congregations to kingdom obedience, to reconcile the broken and alienated, to seek justice for the oppressed, to witness against powers and principalities who trust in bombs and move toward nuclear holocaust." Tracing the impact of militarism on developing countries, Peachey said that arms sales by Canada and the U.S. encourages developing nations to spend their money on military hardware rather than on the educational, health and economic needs of their people. "So the sale of arms by the 'have-nots' bleeds the poor," he said. Simply refusing to participate in military service does not in itself counteract militarism. Peachey said. "Our economic policies are a clear expression of militarism and must be resisted in the same way that we have traditionally resisted conscription . . . Our sincere attempts to serve others in the name of Christ are undermined by our failure to witness against the exploitation of the poor that our arms sales to the Third World represents."

The paper was accepted by the board, with the encouragement that a statement be added emphasizing that the peace testimony does not stand alone but is rooted in Christ's transformation of believers. Several members also hoped that Peachey's paper would be followed up with further study in the churches.

More than 800 turned out for a rally, January 26, to hear messages by Ron Sider, author of *Rich Christians in an Age of Hunger*, and Peter Dyck, who heads MCC's work in Europe and North Africa.

Speaking on "The Bible and the Poor," Sider cited numerous biblical passages showing that "God is on the side of the poor. I do not mean that poverty is good or that the poor are already Christians . . . God is not a Marxist. He doesn't love the poor more than the rich, but God does lift up the poor . . . He cares when people enslave and oppress others." Sider warned that biblical churches have fallen into the trap of theological liberalism and have allowed the surrounding culture rather than the Word of God to shape their values, faith and attitude to the poor. He said many who are doctrinally orthodox still do not believe the authority of the Bible applies to poverty and injustice. "Affluent people who neglect the poor are not the people of God . . . There

comes a point when neglect of the poor is no longer forgiven but is punished eternally."

Peter Dyck described his own experience of receiving food from MCC in Russia during the cold winter of 1921. "Now it is 1979, and it's a long and hard winter for thousands, maybe millions of people. Will they have hope and courage because you care like your fathers and mothers cared before you?"

The poor are waiting for someone to stand with them and the rich are waiting for someone to show them the way to get involved. But "the real reason for getting involved is because the earth is the Lord's," said Dyck, "and we serve because sharing is our role in the Lord's earth."

Board members were concerned that overseas workers receive spiritual and moral support in their work. They were told that MCC tries to cluster its workers rather than scatter them in isolated regions. Also, further support services such as taped meditations are being developed. "One of our objectives is also to strengthen the workers' ties with the local churches," added Edgar Stoesz.

One member wondered why more "outsiders" are becoming interested in MCC. "Are we (Mennonites and Brethren in Christ) losing the vision for service in the name of Christ and they are picking it up?"

It was suggested that one reason why Mennonite applications are declining is that young people in particular are emphasizing economic security and affluence. Fewer are willing to take the risk of volunteer service.

Paul Leatherman, who heads the self-help program, reported that this segment of MCC's domestic activity is growing by 30 to 35 percent a year. More thrift shops are opening, and sales of self-help materials flourishing. Income from relief sales and thrift shops now represents 25 percent of MCC's constituency contributions.

Financially, MCC finished 1978 in the black. A \$9,463,000 budget was approved for next year. This is only 5 percent higher than the 1978 budget, but 17 percent higher than what actually was spent last year. The agency is projecting an increase of 12.5 percent in constituency contributions in the next year.

—Walter Kroeker with assistance from Tina Mast Burnett.



Anna Engle went to Africa as a missionary in 1926. For more than fifty years she has served the church overseas and at home. She is presently working with The Evangelical Alliance Mission (TEAM). Her present address will be found in the quarterly Missions Directory.

### "Thank You"

Dear Friends:

This letter comes not in response to a "Visitor" article, but as a special "thank you" to its readers.

I sincerely thank you who in your prayer times use "The Challenge" of our Missionary Prayer Fellowship. I thank you for praying for me during the week of January 29 which happened to be birth date as well. Our gracious faithful Lord marvelously answered your prayers. I do praise him and thank you.

Those days for me here were heavy days. In one consecutive fifteen hour period, I spent about fourteen hours in my Zulu work. In ejaculatory prayer I would pray and write, and pray and work. Our Lord tenderly poured in strength, and gave inspiration and clarity. It actually was a very precious experience, for He sustained and kept me in a really strenuous time. My heart continues to sing praises to Him.

In fact throughout these years He has wonderfully upheld and blessed and guided. By His grace He has given a varied, fruitful ministry here. I rejoice to know that some of you have been faithfully, regularly praying for me. It is with deep appreciation that I write now saying a very warm "Thank you." Please continue to pray for me until God has finished with me here.

You will be happy to know that five of the six Zulu sections have gone, and that the publishers (TEAM) will shortly, D.V., have the work in the hands of the printers. Kindly pray on.

Anna R. Engle  
10 Devenish Court  
Pretoria, South Africa

### Urbana '79

On December 27-31, 1979, more than 17,000 students, faculty, pastors and missionaries will gather on the University of Illinois campus in Urbana, Illinois. They will be attending the Twelfth Inter-Varsity Student Missions Convention. The convention theme is **THAT ALL NATIONS MIGHT BELIEVE AND OBEY JESUS CHRIST**. Also, the 14 major speakers for the event are confirmed. Four speakers returning to URBANA are John Stott, Billy Graham, Elisabeth Elliot, and Luis Palau.

The theme is taken from the Apostle Paul's letter to the Romans. It includes these perspectives: "all nations" says the peoples of the world; "believe and obey" speak of evangelism and discipleship—both parts of the world mission of the church; and Jesus Christ is the sole object of these endeavors.

The convention was filled to capacity in 1976 as some 17,112 attended and more than 3,000 were turned away. Students began registering even a year in advance for the '79 triennial convention. The present count is more than 500.

For further information contact:

Jimmy Locklear, Information Director  
URBANA 79  
233 Langdon Street  
Madison, Wisconsin 53703  
(608) 257-0263

### "Isn't That Like Heaven?"

## Camp Freedom-1979

"Birds are Singing,  
Sun's a Shin'n,  
Flowers are Blooming,  
Saints are shout'n',  
Now, isn't that like Heaven?"

The Camp Director was greeted at the left exit door of the tabernacle by these words from one of the senior saints. She had lovely white hair and wears a friendly smile wherever she is seen. She is only one member of the ever-increasing Camp Freedom Family. The largest attendance at any one service was 411. In fact, the average attendance was up 3.8% over last year. This was also noticeable in the meal lines. More than 6,000 meals were served during the 12 day camp meeting.

The Operational Budget of \$12,000 was met; more than \$14,000 was raised for capital and \$2,284.16 was given to mission's ministries. At least 23 states of the United States and two provinces of Canada were represented, along with persons from England, Nassau, Honduras, and Peru. More than 50 persons attended from Canada.

Elwood and Joann Stuart, with their 16 year old son, Jeff served as musicians. Our evangelists were Rev. Luke Keefer, Sr. and Rev. Kermit Farlow. Bro. Keefer came through with his eloquent logic and forceful presentations. God mightily used him to articulate the doctrine of biblical Holiness. Bro. Farlow of Sofia, North Carolina, serves as a general evangelist of the Wesleyan Church. His Bible-centered messages were spirit anointed.

This was the second year for Children's Meetings. Sr. Ruth Potteiger illustrated and told the story of Pilgrim's Progress. Sr. Clara Leedom, missionary to the Bahamas, gave a continued story. The Board is considering some planned youth activities for the 1980 Camp.

Healing Day was a precious day. Testimonies of healing followed the anointing service. We keep getting reports annually of previous years when God did special miracles. One of the members of the praying teams said that he never felt God so near in a healing service as this year.

Mission's Day brought together praises, reports of miracles, witnessing experiences, prayer requests and the urgency of our time. We heard how geographical, racial, language, and cultural barriers were bridged by the speakers: Clara Leedom, Bahamas; Luke Keefer, Africa; and Irene Hanley, Sar Shalom Ministries.

The camp closed with a full tabernacle, answered prayers, shouts of victory, new persons in the family of God and increased power and incentives to holiness of life and conduct.

Plan now to attend next year. The dates are January 23-February 3, 1980. The speakers are Rev. Neal Anderson and Rev. Bedsaul Agee. The singers are Paul and Nancy Gray.

Simon A. Lehman, Jr.  
Director



### Evening Classes Offered at E.B.I.

Evening Classes were started on Monday, February 12, at the Ekuphileni Bible Institute for those who have employment during the day, thus preventing attendance at the regular scheduled classes.

### Service Openings

#### Home and Overseas

There are openings at home and overseas for persons with dedication and training.

See the February 10 *Visitor* for listing of openings. Contact Brethren in Christ Missions, Stevensville, Ontario or Elizabethtown, PA.

### Births

**Burchett:** Jenny Marie, born Feb. 17, to Ed and Karen Burchett, Highland congregation, Oh.

**Herndon:** Nathan Alan, born Nov. 27, to Adin and Arnell Herndon, Skyline View congregation, Pa.

**Kauffman:** Jeremiah Christopher, born Dec. 9, to Daun and Tammy Kauffman, Skyline View congregation, Pa.

**Keefer:** Curtis Rahn, born Feb. 10, to Mr. and Mrs. Rahn Keefer, Free Grace congregation, Pa.

**Miller:** Randall III and Daniel Paul, born Feb. 18, to Randall and Marilyn (Bigham) Miller, Skyline View congregation, Pa.

**Morrison:** Dwight Adam, born Jan. 31, to Don and Cheryl (Hertzler) Morrison, Mechanicsburg congregation, Pa.

**Peckman:** Tony Ray, born Jan. 19, to Lowell and Evelyn (Rotz) Peckman, Chambersburg congregation, Pa.

**Raab:** Beth Anne, born Jan. 30, to Larry and Joan Raab, Skyline View congregation, Pa.

**Schreiber:** Daniel Alan, born Jan. 28, to Mr. and Mrs. Harold Schreiber, Free Grace congregation. Pa.

**Souders:** Shauna Jean, born Feb. 3, to John and Marsha (Leshner) Souders, Chambersburg congregation, Pa.

**Wildeson:** Brent David, born Jan. 14, to Harold and Karen (Burkholder) Wildeson, Chambersburg congregation, Pa.

### Weddings

**Agee-Rupert:** Olive Arlene, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Murl Rupert, Hastings, Mi., and Thomas Michael, son of Rev. and Mrs. Bedsaul Agee, Merrill, Mi., Feb. 23, in the Mechanicsburg Brethren in Christ Church with father of the groom officiating.

**Bittinger-Ehrhart:** Tina, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Robert O. Ehrhart, Orrstown, Pa., and Paul R., son of Mr. and Mrs. Paul S. Bittinger,

Chambersburg, Pa., Jan. 6, 1979, in the Chambersburg Brethren in Christ Church, with Rev. A. Graybill Brubaker officiating.

**Blackburn-Kiesewetter:** Debbie, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Louis Kiesewetter, Piqua, Ohio, and Robert, son of Mr. and Mrs. Ralph Blackburn, West Milton, Ohio, January 20, 1979, in the Highland Brethren in Christ Church with Rev. Louis Cober officiating.

**Gray-Gray:** Sandra Jean Gray, Rouzerville, Pa., and Max Gray, Chambersburg, Pa., remarried Feb. 24, in the Five Forks Brethren in Christ Church with Rev. Rupert Turman officiating.

**Hann-Martin:** Mary Martin, daughter of Nevin Brubaker and the late Catherine Brubaker, Chambersburg, Pa., and Charles, son of Ellis and the late Erma Hann, Everett, Pa., Nov. 18, 1978, in the Montgomery Brethren in Christ Church, with Rev. H. Melvin Boose officiating.

**Noel-Byers:** Pamela Lou, daughter of Bishop and Mrs. John A. Byers, Elizabethtown, Pa., and Charles L., son of Mr. and Mrs. Robert Noel, Tamarac, Fl., Dec. 2, in the Elizabethtown Brethren in Christ Church with father of the bride and Rev. Michael Noel officiating.

**Tucker-Presey:** Annette Presey and Rodney Tucker, Oct. 7, 1978, in the Welland Brethren in Christ Church with Rev. Walter Kelly officiating.

### Obituaries

**Despot:** Richard M. Despot, Hollidaysburg, Pa., born Oct. 17, 1943, died Feb. 18, 1979. He was the son of Anthony E. and Agnes E. (Sine) Despot. In addition to his parents, he is survived by a brother, Anthony E. Jr. He was a member of the Canoe Creek Brethren in Christ Church.

**Dickey:** Linda Anne Dickey, Union, Ohio, died Jan. 2, 1979, at the age of 32. She was married to Joe L. Dickey who survives. She is also survived by her parents and a daughter, Michele. She was a member of the Highland Brethren in Christ Church. Interment was in the Oakland Cemetery.

**Ebersole:** Harvey H. Ebersole, Hershey, Pa., born April 14, 1915, died Jan. 29, 1979 in the Harrisburg Hospital. He was married to Sara Brightbill who survives. Also surviving are two daughters: Mrs. Violet E. Frey and Ruth A.; three sons: Harvey H. Jr., Roy B., and Gary R.; a sister; and ten grandchildren. The funeral service was conducted in the Shenks Brethren in Christ Church by Rev. Isaac Kanode and Rev. Frederick Geib. Interment was in the Shenks Cemetery.

**Gibble:** Isaac C. Gibble, Elizabethtown, Pa., born July 26, 1884, died Feb. 3, 1979. He was the son of Samuel and Barbara Gibble. He was married to Mary K. Kelechner who preceded him in death nine days earlier. He is survived by five children: Isaac K., Mrs. Dorothy Ruhl, Mrs. Martha Kready, Mrs. Pauline Louser, and Mrs. Arlene Ross; 14 grandchildren; 12 great grand-children; and two brothers. He was a member of the Brethren in Christ Church. The funeral home was officiated by Rev. Graybill

### Charles Eshelman Memorial Service

Word was received as this issue of the *Visitor* was being finalized of the death on March 6 of Charles Eshelman, former Brethren in Christ missionary and educator. A memorial service was held on March 10 in the Carlisle Brethren in Christ Church with interment in the Grantham Cemetery.

It was the wish of the deceased and is the desire of the family that in lieu of flowers, memorial gifts in support of the educational preparation of pastors be given. These contributions, made payable to the Board of Administration, may be sent to Mrs. Mary Eshelman, Messiah Village, 100 Mt. Allen Drive, Mechanicsburg, PA 17055.

Wolgemuth. Interment was in the Shenks Cemetery.

**Herr:** Mrs. Helen Collins Herr, Mt. Joy, Pa., born in Chicago, Il., April 1, 1899, died Feb. 6, 1979. She was the daughter of John and Mamie Adelotte Smith. She was married to Charles Collins who preceded her in death in 1949. She later married Clarence Herr who survives. She is also survived by three daughters: Mrs. Helen Book, Mrs. Norma Sollenberger, and Mrs. Betty Hoffman; two step-daughters: Mrs. Letha Hershey and Mrs. Minnie Danz; 10 grandchildren; 15 great-grandchildren; two sisters; and two brothers. She was a member of the Cross Roads Brethren in Christ Church where the funeral service was conducted by Rev. Dale H. Engle and Rev. Elbert N. Smith. Interment was in the Air Hill Cemetery.

**Heisey:** Mrs. Verna K. Keisey, Washington Boro, Pa., born Dec. 26, 1919, died Jan. 3, 1979. She was the daughter of Charles M. and Rebecca Schrock Kibler. She was married to Ezra D. Heisey who preceded her in death. She is survived by a daughter, Frances French; two brothers; a sister; and two grandsons. The funeral service was conducted in the Manor Brethren in Christ Church by Rev. John Hawbaker. Interment was in the Habeckers Menonite Cemetery.

**Hess:** Mrs. Anna P. Hess, Messiah Village, Pa., born Sept. 19, 1903, died Feb. 9, 1979. She was preceded in death by her husband, Stine Hess, in 1975. She is survived by three sons: Jay, Byers, and Glenn; a daughter, Janice; three brothers; and two sisters. She was a member of the Montgomery Brethren in Christ Church where the funeral was conducted by Rev. H. Melvin Boose. Interment was in the Cedar Hill Cemetery.

**Stoner:** Mrs. Mary Ellen (Carper) Stoner, Martinsburg, Pa., born Sept. 20, 1883, died Dec. 22, 1978. She was married to Irvin M. Stoner who preceded her in death. She is survived by three children: Mrs. Barbara Stem, Mrs. Ethel Burket, and Mrs. Verna Stem; 16 grandchildren, 33 great-grandchildren; and two great-great-grandchildren. A daughter preceded her in death in Dec., 1978. She was a member of the Martinsburg Brethren in Christ Church where the funeral service was conducted by Rev. Robert Keller. Interment was in Fairview Cemetery.



## Moving Ahead

# To Reach Out With Christ's Love

Douglas Sider

If I am still alive in the year 2025—and I hope I am—I will be 76 years old. I expect that God's worldwide church will still be moving ahead and reaching out with Christ's love.

Sunday, June 3, 1973, in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, eleven children gathered for Sunday School at the Brethren In Christ Church. They were taught by two dedicated but discouraged staff members. At the 11 a.m. service seven people met for worship. Because we are located in a prosperous and growing city of over 130,000 people, I was able to promise the people that they were "most fortunate to be a part of an exciting program that God was planning in Massey Place!" I believed it! I felt it. I knew it. This conviction continues to spread.

One hundred thirty thousand people in Saskatoon. How could we bridge the gap? Most people didn't even know we existed, let alone think that we could help them; therefore we

began researching the community to identify its needs.

That first year several thousand homes were contacted. While it is far easier to guess at community needs while comfortably seated with a committee in the church, it is also far less accurate than when you go door to door. We discovered the needs of people. We learned what would interest them.

We then vowed that every Bible study, Sunday school lesson, message, and every ministry would have as its one goal the intersection of God's eternal truth and some clearly defined contemporary situation. Biblical truth without application to where people live—without answering questions they're asking, is irrelevancy. We endeavoured to be both biblical and life-situational.

This decision led us to some exciting new ministries. A "New Horizons" Sunday School class for the mentally handicapped adult has a constant lengthy waiting list of applications.

The writer is pastor of the Massey Place congregation, Saskatoon, Saskatchewan.

These special adults are excited and somewhat surprised when they learn that "God loves them and so do we."

"Ladies' Morning Out" is a weekly Bible Study targeted to reach lonely homemakers in the community. "Woman's Discovery Group" held Wednesday evenings is a study for unchurched professional women. These two excellent ministries serve approximately forty young women each week while their children experience loving child-care services provided by the church.

As people experience the love of Christ, we desire that they learn immediately the joy of growth. Therefore, Wednesday evening is called "FAMILY NITE". This one night—one hour program is targeted to reach every person in our church. A typical family nite experience goes something like this:

A young family arrives at the church at 6:45 p.m. and places the infant in nursery care. The seven year old loves Kid's Klub, while Mom and Dad may either join an indepth Bible Study or a training session (i.e. Sunday school or personal evangelism). They may also attend the Family Nite Pastor's Class introducing them to Christ and the church, while others choose to attend the Woman's Discovery Group.

Below: Loving God is loving children in the church nursery. Right: Two morning worship services: an inspiring message of hope, joy and forgiveness.



Evangelical Visitor





Stories, songs, crafts, caring during the Sunday school hour.

All sessions dismiss simultaneously at 8 p.m. This Family Nite has proven to be a prosperous concept. It eliminates the problem of children feeling "every night Daddy's at the church." In addition, it's an exciting feeling to have half of your Sunday morning attendance in Bible study on Wednesday Night.

In the Fall of 1978, due to a lack of space Sunday school classes began meeting in three community homes, a local restaurant within walking distance, and a doctor's office. At present up to one hundred students meet outside of our church building each Sunday. Adults in the restaurant enjoy an early morning coffee which helps to relax those who have "never been in Sunday school before".

March 19, 1978, we began a second Sunday morning worship service, beginning at 9:45 a.m. This Fall we will launch a second Sunday school

program. Worship and Sunday school programs will then operate concurrently from 9:30 a.m. to 10:30 a.m. and 11:00 a.m. to 12 noon. This is a positive step in reaching our community. In the past ten months up to 50 unchurched adults have been reached for Christ, people who came to church the first time simply because worship was at a convenient time—they could choose. The success of this program guarantees its continuation.

Our community is young, with many mothers who are working outside their home. To meet the need of child-care for 2-5 year olds we are launching a five-day-a-week nursery school program. This caring ministry will also offer opportunity in reaching parents for Christ. September will also bring to our congregation the opportunity for indepth Bible study. A professor from a local Bible college will teach a class at the church one or two nights a week. People will register for this Bible class as they would in any Bible school.

In the next decade we see God leading us into helping ministries which will serve the single adult, the divorced, and the alcoholic along with other similar needs.

People are different—they don't fit one mold. We feel that part of our growth is a result of recognizing these differences and striving to meet each person's need. We endeavour to meet people where they are and then take them to the Cross.

When families with young children begin to attend the church, adequate nursery facilities must be provided at all services so that the mother can come to church and worship while her children are being cared for. Perhaps classes in English would help some members of minority groups. True evangelism loves persons, recognizes their needs and reaches to help them.

I am not reticent to admit I love my church. I am an incredible fanatic, a hopelessly convinced propagandist whose belief is that the Church of Jesus Christ shall continue to grow and succeed.

Most unchurched people in Saskatoon do not refrain from church attendance because of any real ideological disagreement with Christianity; rather, they are non-religious by habit. Just as the church separates itself from the world by its traditions, so unchurched people separate themselves from the church because they never have conceived themselves as Christian people. If our church can approach men and women where they hurt, suffer and cry, it will win them to Jesus Christ.

Below: Coffee served with a smile before Sunday school begins. Right: Dr. Silver leading the adult Sunday school class in a local restaurant.





# Religious News

## Viet 'Boat People' Victims Of Racism, Mooneyham Says

Racism is behind the failure of Western nations to solve "the tragedy of the Vietnamese boat people," according to Dr. Stanley Mooneyham, president of World Vision International.

On a visit in London, he said, "Can you imagine us standing by and doing so little and in such a piecemeal way if nearly 250,000 white Europeans were involved? The difference is that these victims have slant eyes and a colored skin."

Early last year, Dr. Mooneyham went to a number of Western capitals pleading for massive intervention for the "boat people," who are refugees from Communist-run Vietnam. He met indifference and sometimes hostility, the agency says. He said, "The appalling plight of these people in their small leaky boats is the major humanitarian problem facing the world today. It's a straight moral issue. Yet it seems our main solution for them is to let them go to the bottom of the China sea."

## Mother Teresa Honored

Mother Teresa of Calcutta received the 1978 Balzan Prize for humanitarianism, peace, and brotherhood among nations at a ceremony at the National Academy in Rome on March 1. The award, which carried a \$325,000 stipend, was given for the famed nun's dedicated service among "the poorest of the poor."

Mother Teresa, 68, foundress (in 1950) of the Missionaries of Charity who today number 1,300 in 67 countries, was selected by the General Prize Committee of the Milan-based E. Balzan International Foundation. Over the years, Mother Teresa and her nuns have cared for thousands of penniless families, ill and unwanted children, and other needy persons in hostels, clinics, and shelters around the world.

## Survey of Values of Men in U.S.—Sex Ranks Ninth, Religion Tenth

Health, love, peace of mind, and family life topped the list of 11 major values considered by American men under 50 as "very important personally" for a happy and satisfied life, according to a survey by Louis Harris.

Religion was near the bottom of the list, ranked 10th according to the values cited most often by men as being very important. Surprisingly, sex was rated almost as low—ranking 9th.

The 11 values cited most frequently by the men as "very important personally" to their happy and satisfied life, were in descending order: health (chosen by 89 per cent), love (85 per cent), peace of mind and family life (both 84 per cent), work (65 per

cent), friends (63 per cent), respect from others (58 per cent), education (57 per cent), sex (49 per cent), religion (41 per cent), money (39 per cent).

The section on religion and psychotherapy revealed that 82 per cent of men believe in a Supreme Being, and 68 per cent believe in an afterlife, but only 30 per cent regularly attend worship services. About 69 per cent had positive feelings about religion, describing it as either somewhat or very important to them.

## 6 Months of Study, Preparation Must Precede Marriage, Bishop Rules

Bishop James R. Rausch, of Phoenix, has announced that as of July 1, Catholic couples intending to be married in the diocese must undergo six months of preparation. Purpose of the change is to heighten the stability of Catholic marriages in the diocese. There had been no set period for marriage preparation, except for very young persons.

The policy on marriage preparation has three main points:

A couple must wait at least six months to marry after notifying the parish priest of intention to marry.

Under the guidance of a priest or a deacon, the engaged persons must take a "premarital inventory" in which they examine their views on children, money, religion and other matters that might affect their married life.

The engaged persons must take part in programs designed to deepen their understanding of the problems of marriage. Such programs include counseling weekends and discussions supervised by married persons and a priest.

## Southern Baptists Report Declines In Baptism, Membership Growth

Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) projections show a decline in baptisms for the third consecutive year and the smallest increase in membership for decades during 1978.

Projections compiled by the research services department of the Baptist Sunday School Board, based on information from 17,361 congregations, indicate that Southern Baptists will have baptized 336,356 persons in 1978. That is a 2.7 per cent decrease from 1977, which had been itself an 11 per cent decline from the previous year.

According to the 1978 projections, Southern Baptists will number 13,200,948 by the end of the year—an increase of only 0.9 per cent over the 13,083,199 reported for 1977. The figures were reported during the annual meeting of the evangelism directors of 34 SBC state conventions.

Martin Bradley, manager of the Sunday School Board's research services said, "We actually are gaining church membership, but our rate of growth is declining. Last year, we had a growth rate of 1.2 per cent. For the past 15 years our growth rate has gradually dropped. The rate of growth this year may be the smallest we have recorded. We know it will be among the smallest in several decades."

## 111th CHA Convention

The 111th Annual Christian Holiness Association Convention will be held on April 17-19, 1979, on the campus of Olivet Nazarene College, Kankakee, Illinois.

The theme for this year's convention will be "Holy Living—A Universal Language."

This year's program will bring a number of outstanding speakers to the convention. Presenting major addresses will be: Dr. Samuel Kamaleson, Dr. W.E. McCumber, General Clarence Wiseman, and Dr. Wayne McCown. The Presidential Luncheon speaker will be CHA President, Dr. Dennis Kinlaw. The Fellowship Breakfast speaker will be Mrs. Mildred Rice.

The Christian Holiness Association represents more than three million persons in North America and five million worldwide. Every major religious body in the United States that identifies with the Wesleyan-Arminian theological position holds membership in The Christian Holiness Association.

## Bible is Now Published In 1,660 Languages

Statistics released by the American Bible Society (ABS) show that at least one book of the Bible had been published in 1,660 languages and dialects by the end of 1978, an increase of 29 languages over the 1977 count.

Other figures reported in the annual ABS Scripture count show that the complete Bible has been published in 268 languages, New Testaments in 453, and portions in 139.

Africa ranks as the region with the largest number of languages in which at least one book of the Bible has been translated (482), followed by Asia with 428 languages and Latin America with 269.

## Billy Graham Says Press Can Help Restore U.S. 'Fundamental Values'

Evangelist Billy Graham has "challenged" the press to join him and others who are seeking to do something about the "moral and spiritual dilemma that faces all of us." Addressing a National Press Club luncheon, he said the media can "bring fundamental values to light again."

"Let's work for the reversal of the runaway trend toward moral degeneracy that has destroyed so many nations in the past," he said. "Let's seek an emphasis on the positive virtues, and let's communicate the fact that fundamental moral values have the same power to heal the minds, hearts and souls of people (today) as they always have."

In his third National Press Club address, the evangelist said the "continuing rampant escalation of (military) arms (spending) in our world is not merely a political issue; it's a moral issue."

While he does not support unilateral disarmament, he said he is for disarmament, and as a Christian he is "committed to work for peace."



## A Sobering Truth

March 25, 1979

Life is too short, and eternity is too long, to live or to die with an unforgiving spirit.

It is commonly accepted among us that man stands in need of God's forgiveness. What is not as commonly understood is that God's forgiveness is directly related to our forgiveness of our fellowmen.

For if you forgive men when they sin against you, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive men their sins, your Father will not forgive your sins. (Matthew 6:14, 15).

And when you stand praying, if you hold anything against anyone, forgive him, so that your Father in heaven may forgive you your sins (Mark 11:25).

(The Parable of the Unmerciful Servant). In anger his master turned him over to the jailers until he should pay back all he owed.

This is how my heavenly Father will treat each of you unless you forgive your brother from your heart (Matthew 18:34, 35).

In the Ephesian letter Paul calls upon the reader to

Get rid of all bitterness, rage and anger, brawling and slander, along with every form of malice. Be kind and compassionate to one another, just as in Christ God forgave you (4:31, 32).

In Paul's letter to the Galatians he includes along with the sins of immorality "... hatred, discord, ... dissensions, factions ..." and then adds, "I warn you, as I did before, that those who live like this will not inherit the kingdom of God (5:20, 21)."

Permit me to make five observations:

An unforgiving spirit nullifies God's forgiving grace. This may run counter to our theology, but the statements of Jesus are so forthright that I am compelled to include them in my understanding of salvation.

We misread the meaning of God's grace when we presume that God's forgiveness is effective regardless of our response. We fail to understand the offer of God's forgiveness when, like the unforgiving servant, we have been forgiven so much yet withhold our forgiveness for much lesser offenses.

**Forgiveness** is costly. It should not be assumed that it is ever easy. The cross should be evidence of this. In the midst of that cosmic event Jesus spoke the word of forgiveness even as he paid the price of ours.

So we should not assume that we can really deal with hurts and offenses by simply saying "That's O.K." or "Just forget it." Granting forgiveness may well take a dying to pride and to self. It will call for prayer and divine aid. Forgiveness is a product of God's grace; a fruit of the Spirit. Hatred and revenge are the world's way of dealing with hurts and offenses. These are in Satan's game plan. How we respond is evidence of whose children we are—children of God or children of the world.

A forgiving spirit is an essential and unique quality of

life within the church. It is really what the church is all about—a forgiven and forgiving community.

Jesus revealed the importance of a forgiving spirit within the church when he outlined a pattern of dealing with offenses between members. It is essential to forgive with my heart the one who has wronged me, even if forgiveness is not sought (e.g. Stephen and Jesus). But I need to do more. I need to seek to restore the broken relationship that has occurred between me and the other person.

The witness of a church is clearly affected—for good or ill—by the life of its members. The ministry of the church is hindered by sin within the body. I would venture that an unforgiving spirit—resentments held and hurts nurtured—does more to destroy the church's witness and hinder its ministry than the moral and ethical sins which are usually thought of when we speak of sin within the church.

**The principle** that the sins of the parents are visited upon the children is nowhere more evident than in the case of an unforgiving spirit. For the sake of the children parents cannot afford to harbor resentment and ill-will. It tends to nullify whatever Christian nurture is attempted by parents or church. It embitters the children towards the church and the Christian faith.

I have seen families lost to the church and to the kingdom because a father was unwilling to forgive or a mother nurtured a hurt which grew until, like a cancer, it permeated her life. Indeed the personalities of children are often warped and poisoned by the bitterness reflected in the home.

**Life is too short and eternity is too long to live or to die with an unforgiving spirit.**

We do not minimize the effect that an unforgiving spirit has on the person who harbors it; nor the devastating effect it has on the children who grow up in an atmosphere of bitterness and resentment; nor the effect this has on the life and witness and ministry of the church; nor what it does to relationships on the job or in the community. But the most sobering fact is that the Bible offers little or no eternal hope for one who harbors an unforgiving spirit. He or she remains unforgiven by God.

The Bible clearly teaches that it is God's forgiveness that provides an alternative to his judgment. When we close the channels to God's forgiveness we come under his judgment.

Let us not presume on God's grace by assuming that Christ really did not mean what he so clearly said, "For if ye do not forgive men their sins, your heavenly Father will not forgive your sins."

It bears repeating—life is too short and eternity is too long to live or to die with an unforgiving spirit.

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# Religious News

cent), friends (61 per cent), respect from others (58 per cent), education (57 per cent), sex (49 per cent), religion (41 per cent), money (39 per cent).

The section on college

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MESSIAH COLLEGE  
GRANTHAM PA 17027

*For we being many  
are one bread, and  
one body: for we  
are all partakers  
of that one bread.*

*I Corinthians 10:17*

Christ through His broken body unites believers across national, racial and economic barriers. An important goal for MCC is to work in partnership with local churches around the world in a ministry to the hungry, the captives, the blind, the oppressed.



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